

Weekly Column for January 5, 2006

Tonight will mark the first time the new City Council meets following the elections of this past November. This new council will have a great responsibility during the next two years as we fight to strengthen the road we are traveling on.

It will also have a tough act to follow. The previous council helped transform the way business was done in the City of Troy. Petty politics were thrown aside in the name of achieving positive end results for Troy. The Council did an excellent job in moving forward with the rezoning of the Hoosick Street corridor and South Troy waterfront.

It also passed important pieces of legislation that dealt with improving the safety and quality of life of our residents. Both the school curfew law and the ordinance regulating the hours of convenience stores were sharply criticized when first introduced to the Council. However, the nine members of the council listened to both sides of the argument on each issue, and moved forward with what they believed was the best course of action.

The results prove they were right. In 2004, crime was down in the City of Troy by 4.9 percent. And with 2005 statistics coming out in the next few months we believe we will again see a drop in crime in Troy.

That is vitally important.

The council also took important steps towards securing the financial future of Troy by working closely with the administration on the yearly budget. This year we limited the tax increase to 1.49 percent despite increasing costs across the board. Health care, retirement costs, and, as you know, gas prices, continue to rise beyond predicted levels.

However, with the support of the Council we cut areas in the City that, although it would certainly help Troy move along, had to be balanced against the needs of our residents. That is what we did for the past two years, and it is what I hope the new council will continue to do during this term.

I want to thank former Council members Bob Armet, Art Judge, Karen Messick and Jack Mahoney for all of the hard work they put in since first being elected. As a former councilman, I understand fully how hard the job can sometimes be. We know you will all be valuable members of the community and wish you luck wherever life should lead.

Have a great weekend.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy